

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Higgins, please. Senator Haberman. Senator Marsh. Senator Higgins, did you wish to speak again?

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. I think all of us are aware that sometimes bids are made legitimately and sometimes we have what we call bid rigging. The point I am trying to make is if the Revenue Department wants this bill to pass, why didn't they, six months ago, a year ago when they knew the building was going to be vacated, get the appraisal? Why not? Doesn't that...Senator Marsh, I have the floor. Would you kindly wait your turn. The point I am making is I wouldn't introduce a bill to sell a building if I didn't know what it was going to be worth. I think we are cheating the taxpayers if we advance this bill. Maybe Higgins will be wrong. Maybe it's only worth \$130,000. I don't know who the Department of Administrative Services sent as their expert on building appraisals. If you want to advance it to Select File, fine. But all I keep hearing is we want to raise taxes. This we can do without increasing anybody's fees. All I am asking is, why wasn't anything done until this bill came before the body and still nothing has been done to get a legitimate appraisal on it? As far as the bidding process goes, I think you all remember a bunch of road bidders that went to court for what we call bid rigging. I have been told in Omaha there is already somebody there ready to buy the building, and I won't mention any names, but it makes me very suspect about it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Hefner, please. Is Senator Hefner around? Okay. That was the last speaker. Senator Warner, would you like to close?

SENATOR WARNER: Sure. Mr. President, I move the bill be advanced. Again, it is authorization to dispose of the property or long term lease which would be a reasonable approach to use. If it is sold, obviously, it would be on a bid basis. It makes no sense for the state to sit and hold a vacant building for an extended period of time subject to whatever liability, it could be vandalism or whatever else might occur. Obviously, the building ought to be moved. I assume that an independent...the state can pay for an independent appraisal as well if it has not been done. That I do not know. But, in any event, it is what somebody will bid for the building is what it is worth.